

specialty crop producers are confronted with a number of challenges that threaten their viability and in some cases their ability to survive. It is no secret that my State of Washington is a major specialty crop State. We, in fact, rank No. 1 in the Nation in the production of a number of specialty crops—from apples to pears to cherries to raspberries to concord grapes, just to name a few of them, with 250 other fruits and vegetables produced in Washington State. The specialty crop industry represents a large segment of the agricultural commodities which serve the economic backbone of my State and many others.

Unlike row crops such as corn, soybeans, cotton, there is virtually no support from the USDA for these fruits, and vegetable producers do not have access to crop insurance for their crops. Specialty crop producers have been hurt as the chairman of the committee enunciated.

There has been a lot more—from fires and droughts, hailstorms, and wind. Our fruit and vegetable producers have faced some major challenges during the last two years. These same industries have been very hurt—and in some cases decimated—by the inflow of specialty crops from overseas, as well as a lack of access to labor and pests and diseases.

I believe there is a need to make the commitment to help growers in all of our States and provide them with the assistance they desperately need.

Many Americans don't realize that specialty crops represent 51 percent of all farm cash receipts in the United States. That is more than \$41 billion in annual farm value.

Although our fruit and vegetable industry is large, it is not larger than other commodities. They have access to relatively little of the overall agricultural disaster programs.

The section 32 grants to States to help specialty crops will help our fruit and vegetable producers survive these difficult conditions. Whether this is supporting research which is important, or promotion or marketing that is critical, these funds will help our fruit and vegetable farmers in business in every single State.

I think everyone in the Senate knows that the United States should produce as much domestic food product as it can. And the \$75 million that is targeted by this McCain amendment to help keep our fruit and vegetable producers in business is simply a modest investment, and it is a commitment to keep our farmers in business in very difficult and challenging times.

I urge my colleagues to make the commitment to support the specialty crop farms and the farmers and the families who depend on it, and I urge them to vote against the McCain amendment.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Louisiana.

# AMENDMENT NO. 3728

Mr. VITTER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the pending business be temporarily set aside and that we call up amendment No. 3728 for consideration, which has been ruled germane.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection? Without objection, it is so ordered.

The clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Louisiana [Mr. VITTER], for himself, and Ms. LANDRIEU, proposes an amendment numbered 3728.

Mr. VITTER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that reading of the amendment be dispensed with.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The amendment is as follows:

(Purpose: To provide for flood prevention in the State of Louisiana, with an offset)

On page 165, line 19, strike “\$10,600,000,000” and insert “\$10,400,000,000”.

On page 168, between lines 8 and 9, insert the following:

## FLOOD PROTECTION, LOUISIANA

SEC. 2054. (a) There shall be made available \$200,000,000 for the Secretary of the Army (referred to in this section as the “Secretary”) to provide, at full Federal expense—

(1) pumping capacity and other measures required to prevent flooding associated with modifications to outfall canals in Jefferson and Orleans Parishes, Louisiana;

(2) repairs, replacements, modifications, and improvements of non-Federal levees and associated protection measures—

(A) in areas of Terrebonne Parish, and of Jefferson Parish in the vicinity of Jean Lafitte; and

(B) on the east bank of the Mississippi River in Plaquemines Parish, Louisiana; and

(3) for armoring the hurricane and storm damage reduction system in south Louisiana.

(b) A project under this section shall be initiated only after non-Federal interests have entered into binding agreements with the Secretary to pay 100 percent of the operation and maintenance costs of the project and to hold and save the United States free from damages due to the construction or operation and maintenance of the project, except for damages due to the fault or negligence of the United States or its contractors.

(c) The Secretary shall submit to Congress a report detailing a modified plan to protect lower Plaquemines Parish, Louisiana, from damage attributable to hurricanes with a focus on—

(1) protecting populated areas;

(2) energy infrastructure;

(3) structural and nonstructural coastal barriers and protection;

(4) port facilities; and

(5) the long-term maintenance and protection of the deep draft navigation channel on the Mississippi River.

(d) Not later than 30 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall offer to enter into a contract with the National Academies to provide to the Secretary a report, by not later than 90 days after the date of enactment of this Act, describing, for the period beginning on the date on which the individual system components for hurricane and storm damage reduction was constructed and ending on the date on which the report is prepared, the difference between—

(1) the portion of the vertical depreciation of the system that is attributable to design

and construction flaws, taking into consideration the settling of levees and floodwalls or subsidence; and

(2) the portion of that depreciation that is attributable to the application of new storm datum that may require a higher level of vertical protection in order to comply with 100-year floodplain certification and standard protect hurricane.

(e) The amounts provided under this heading are designated as an emergency requirement pursuant to section 402 of H. Con. Res. 95 (109th Congress), the concurrent resolution on the budget for fiscal year 2006.

# AMENDMENT NO. 3728, AS MODIFIED

Mr. VITTER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the amendment be modified according to the technical modifications which I have presented to the desk. These modifications do not change the scope of the amendment.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection? Without objection, it is so ordered.

The amendment (No. 3728), as modified, is as follows:

(Purpose: To provide for flood prevention in the State of Louisiana, with an offset)

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

## FLOOD CONTROL AND COASTAL EMERGENCIES

For an additional amount for “Flood Control and Coastal Emergencies”, as authorized by section 5 of the Act of August 18, 1941 (33 U.S.C. 701n), for necessary expenses relating to the consequences of Hurricane Katrina and other hurricanes of the 2005 season, \$3,299,000,000, to remain available until expended: *Provided*, That the Secretary of the Army is directed to use the funds appropriated under this heading to modify, at full Federal expense, authorized projects in southeast Louisiana to provide hurricane and storm damage reduction and flood damage reduction in the greater New Orleans and surrounding areas; of the funds appropriated under this heading, \$200,000,000 shall be used for section 2401; \$530,000,000 shall be used to modify the 17th Street, Orleans Avenue, and London Avenue drainage canals and install pumps and closure structures at or near the lakefront; \$250,000,000 shall be used for storm-proofing interior pump stations to ensure the operability of the stations during hurricanes, storms, and high water events; \$170,000,000 shall be used for armoring critical elements of the New Orleans hurricane and storm damage reduction system; \$350,000,000 shall be used to improve protection at the Inner Harbor Navigation Canal; \$215,000,000 shall be used to replace or modify certain non-Federal levees in Plaquemines Parish to incorporate the levees into the existing New Orleans to Venice hurricane protection project; and \$1,584,000,000 shall be used for reinforcing or replacing flood walls, as necessary, in the existing Lake Pontchartrain and vicinity project and the existing West Bank and vicinity project to improve the performance of the systems: *Provided further*, That any project using funds appropriated under this heading shall be initiated only after non-Federal interests have entered into binding agreements with the Secretary to pay 100 percent of the operation, maintenance, repair, replacement, and rehabilitation costs of the project and to hold and save the United States free from damages due to the construction or operation and maintenance of the project, except for damages due to the fault or negligence of the United States or its contractors: *Provided further*, That the amount provided under this heading is designated as an emergency requirement pursuant to section 402 of